DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 419 965 CE 076 658

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TITLE Through the Lens of a Good Practice Framework. Looking at Our Workplace Education Programs.
PUB DATE 1998-04-00
NOTE 26p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; Educational Needs; *Educational Principles; Educational Research; Equal Opportunities (Jobs); Foreign Countries; *Inplant Programs; Lifelong Learning; Needs Assessment; *Partnerships in Education; Professional Development; Program Content; Program Evaluation; Student Evaluation; Trend Analysis; *Workplace Literacy
IDENTIFIERS Canada

ABSTRACT

A research study used trend analysis to examine case studies of 18 workplace literacy programs with a framework of good practice principles as a template to identify trends in practice. Each case study was examined using the nine components identified in the framework: program orientation, program evaluation, partnerships and participation, equity, principles of adult education, program content and feedback, professional development, assessment, and ongoing learning. Two ways of talking about the results of the trend analysis were used. The first was through a summary table that listed the nine framework components and a key point related to the successful application of that particular principle. It served as an overview of what was found in the trend analysis. The second way of talking about the results was through a text with a story-line. In prose format, each of the framework components was discussed in terms of the major ideas that came out of the trend analysis. A number of common elements from program practice clearly surfaced when enlarged through the lens of the framework: partnerships and participation, program orientation of worker centeredness, and ongoing assessment. The framework needed some fine tuning. Two components were less clearly defined--equity and professional development. (A set of guiding questions directly related to the framework is appended for use as a reflective exercise.) (YLB)

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THROUGH THE LENS OF A GOOD PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

Looking at our Workplace Education Programs

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Maurice Taylor
April 1998

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Looking at Workplace Education Through the Lens of a Good Practice Framework

What is this discussion paper all about?

It's about a framework of good practice principles and how well it held up to some documented workplace program experience. It is also about how you can use the same framework of good practice as:

- a tool for new instructors
- a marketing concept for clients
- a guide for planning programs
- a way to structure instructor training
- as a format to evaluate workplace education programs.

How did this discussion paper come about?

Several steps were involved in developing this paper. It is based on a research design that used a case study method to document a number of workplace literacy programs in the mid-90's. This information was then used to see how well it fit with an early framework of good practice principles. This was called a trend analysis. The results were aired at a recent workplace education forum and together with feedback from the field the document was drafted and revised.

Who are the voices in this discussion paper and what can I expect to find?

Several voices can be heard in the pages of this document. The actual case studies used in the discussion come from interviews with learners, instructors, union representatives, workplace supervisors and human resource managers. The framework itself is the combined efforts of business, labour, education and government representatives. During a conference presentation in November 1997 over thirty participants from across the country in diverse community settings help shape its structure and in depth interviews with three national experts helped fine tune its contents.

What can I expect to find in this discussion paper?

There is information about the workplace case studies, the framework of good practice, the results of the trend analysis, ways to use the framework and a practical exercise using the framework to reflect on your practice.

Workplace Learning

In Canada, since the late 80's, workplace literacy has been gaining recognition as an important part of the adult basic education field. What has fueled this movement is an interest in workplace learning which is now one of the fastest growing areas in adult education. Learning in the workplace can include everything from literacy programs to on-the-job training to advanced technical training. These kinds of learning activities can help individuals redefine their jobs, their work environment and even their careers.

Recent information on workplace learning can be divided into two general categories. The first focuses on the development of learning organizations. The emphasis is on the organizational culture and how it can be changed to focus on learning, growth and corporate change. The second category addresses not only the organization, but also the individual and his or her process of learning within that particular organization. Such things as training techniques and their effectiveness, incentive programs and transfer of learning in the workplace are usually discussed under this category.

To illustrate the scope of some of this new information, a few examples are provided here. Some reports have attempted to define basic skills in particular employment sectors. One report used a national survey to define the basic skills required for manufacturing employees and to explore the actions employers were taking to ensure that their employees had those skills. Another looked at literacy training at a large technological firm. Through reading classes, employees were taught useful strategies related to their organizational culture such as self-monitoring and using background knowledge.

The well known report of the International Literacy Survey (IALS) is another example. It showed that there are strong links between literacy skills, employment, and income. People with

lower literacy skills are more likely to have lower income levels. It also suggests that people with higher literacy levels practice their skills at work and in their daily lives and that the workplace is a better place for reading than the home. Like physical fitness, literacy requires continual practice.

Why are the principles of good practice important?

There are basically two types of workplace models or philosophies. The workplace-driven model focuses on enhancing productivity and quality of goods and services. On the other hand the needs-of-the-worker model highlights the overall development of the worker. Both these types of models share common elements. One of those is in the area of principles of good practice.

Principles of good practice are critical in decisions about how to improve basic skills education. They help guide the steps of planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating workplace literacy. A recent report by ABC CANADA identified the common themes that describe the principles of good practice in workplace literacy. The ideas that were put forward focus around partnership, the importance of presenting a positive model of education, confidentiality, creating relevant learning situations and initial needs assessment.

Building on this information, a national forum, made up of business, labour, education and government representatives, developed a set of statements of good practice principles in workplace education. These statements were then published in the document "Principles of Good Practice in Workplace/Workplace Education: A Report of the Think Tank" in 1995. As a way of sharpening the focus on these principles, this author then analyzed the range of agreement across all statements in an attempt to develop a type of framework. In the next section of framework the reader will find a brief description of each component based on a consensus of the different deliberations of the nationsl forum. The purpose of the framework is to help us organize our literacy experience. However, to further improve its additional information was needed to see if it could actually hold up with evidence from the field. Therefore it was decided to look at 18 case studies of workplace education programs using the framework as a template.

How was it done?

The basic method that was used is called a trend analysis. This method has been applied in the area of adult education policy and human resource development for a number of years. In a trend analysis you examine the practices over time that are described in the workplace case studies using the good practice framework as a guide. The end result is a clearer picture as to the connection between the various parts of the framework and how well it held up. To do this two packages of information are required: the case studies and the framework of good practice.

What were the case studies all about?

Eighteen workplace literacy programs in Canada were examined between 1993 and 1996. The findings from these two projects funded by the National Literacy Secretariat were reported in the documents "Narrowing the skills gap: Workplace literacy programs in Canada" and " Workplace basic skills: A study of 10 Canadian programs". For both of these projects, a case study method was used to better understand the reasons that make a program successful. This method helps to understand the meaning of a program experience with the participants in that particular setting. It also explores how the components mesh together to form a complete picture.

Programs were first selected based on characteristics such as region, program longevity and program innovation. Then a program was considered successful if it demonstrated the following qualities:

1. Improvement by the trainees in the basic skills

2. Productivity gains or improvement in the quality of service as reported by company supervisor

3. An overall positive response from all of the key program stakeholders.

Programs that were written up using the case study method came from the manufacturing, service, health, construction, education, fisheries, utilities and retail industries.

Several ways of collecting information for each program were used:

Individual interviews with five different types of program participants

- Focus groups with the trainees from each of the programs
- Field and observation notes made by the field coordinator
- Relevant workplace documents

This information was then examined and written up to provide 18 different experiences in developing and implementing workplace literacy programs. It also revealed several factors of success common to the programs. Such factors as organizational climate, commitment by management, and flexible organizational structures were identified. Other success components included quality instructors, employee centredness and a positive psychological classroom environment.

How would you describe a Framework of Good Practice?

The framework which appears in Figure 1, begins by placing the program orientation and program evaluation components as circles of the template. There components ground the other principles of good practice. For program orientation, the overall approach taken towards workplace education and training can vary. Three different program orientations arise:

- The workers are the primary focus for education and training with benefits to the employer as secondary. Workers are encouraged to develop both work and personal goals.
- The needs of the company are put first. The goals of learning are completely work related.
- Both individual and organizational needs are considered. The employee's personal and work related needs are linked with those of the organization.

Program orientation will have an impact at all levels of the framework and, therefore, is circular.

Program evaluation will also have a significant impact at all levels of the framework. It is a crucial process for each component of the framework as well as for overall effectiveness. Evaluation is one way participants are recognized for their achievements. All partners should be involved in establishing the success factors that are relevant to them. Realistic objectives for the learner, the group and the company need to be established at the beginning of the program. There must be an agreement among partners on how success is to be measured as well as adequate funding for the evaluation. Management also needs to be prepared for what can and cannot be evaluated. Evaluation can be measured on four levels:

- Satisfaction of the participant
- Knowledge acquisition
- Knowledge transfer
- Impact on other stakeholders

Equal consideration is then given to five components believed to impact the core of the framework which is on-going learning and assessment. There is continuous interaction among these five components. Partnership and participation is the first of these five components. Generally speaking, partnership among stakeholders is crucial for a successful workplace basic skills program. Two levels of partnership exist. The first level involves the partnership between employees, employers or external partnerships such as with the providers or the funders. The second level of partnership includes the participation from the top labour and management representatives in the workplace. This aspect is key to the program success and longevity. What seems to be true is that successful partnerships are dependent on the members having access to relevant information. This access allows them to better understand the issues and to fully participate in the partnership.

Equity is included in the framework as having a close link with partnership and participation. Equity issues involve the consideration of many elements including but not limited to: race, religion, culture, urban/rural, age, language and education. The definition of equity is unique to each workplace and to challenges faced by that work culture. Basic skills programs can act as catalysts for creating an equitable workplace by identifying barriers that exist within the organization.

The third factor in this group of five, relates to the principles of adult

education. Each program is grounded in certain beliefs about adult education. This component in the framework incorporates the notion. Principles of adult education include:

- ❖ Valuing the experience of the learners
- ❖ Using material that is appropriate to adults in the workplace
- ❖ Building on the knowledge of the learners
- ❖ Treating the learners as adults
- ❖ Recognizing that people learn from each other
- ❖ Using on-going evaluation
- ❖ Recognizing that adults have a variety of responsibilities and time commitments.

It is important to know that employees need to be recognized as decision makers especially in designing their own workplace programs.

Program content and delivery is the fourth factor and an important component of the framework. Both content and methods should support and encourage the development of portable skills and lifelong learning. The program structure should be flexible with relevant learning which is responsive to the voice of the worker. The pace of the learning should depend on the individual. As well the times and locations of the programs need to be convenient with voluntary participation. The program content and delivery should help participants transfer what they have learned to workplace and to their personal lives.

The professional development of the staff running the program is the fifth component of the group of five that surrounds on-going learning and assessment of the learner. The approach to professional development for practitioners needs to be well thought out. When considering who should deliver the program, attitudes and prior learning should be considered as much as academic qualifications. Commonly stated characteristics of professional staff involved in workplace education programs include:

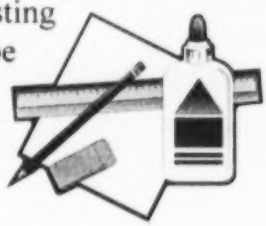
- ✏ An understanding of adult education principles and adult learning styles
- ✏ An ability to adapt to individual and organizational needs
- ✏ An aptitude for working with people at all levels in an organization

- A familiarity with the practices within business and labour environments.

Assessment is the next component of the framework and it is closely linked with on-going learning. This aspect can refer to a variety of measures:

- Initial workplace needs assessment
- Literacy task analysis
- Initial individual assessment needs
- An ongoing final assessment of individual and workplace needs.

The whole idea of assessment is to focus on developing employee goals, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Assessment is an on-going process and it often begins with a one-on-one interview. Tools used during assessment should help employees gain an awareness about how and what they are learning. If testing is used, it should be employee driven and volunteer based with results kept confidential.



At the centre of the framework is the on-going learning that takes place with the employee. The workplace can be described as both a learning centre and a working centre. It presents a natural environment for lifelong learning. Programs with a focus on practical content view on-going learning as central to both work performance and personal growth. Each new task prepares employees for the next task and for the next step in training.

What is important to remember about the framework of good practice is that the interaction among the components is dynamic. It should be viewed as a structure in motion and not linear. Although it appears as a "snapshot" in time, it represents real people and real events and movement between these two aspects.

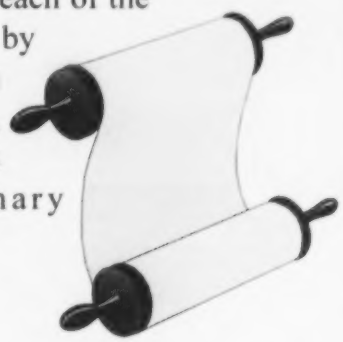
How was the trend analysis done?

Each case study was examined using the nine components identified in the framework. Looking for trends in practice across all 18 programs was made easier because the same structure was used for each case study. In other words, the same categories appeared in each write-up such as:

- company background
- services and training delivered
- decision making about the program and

✏ barriers to implementation

As is typical in trend analysis, the different good practice principles were uncovered in each of the case studies by using data code sheets, research notes and summary charts.



What did the trend analysis say?

In this discussion paper two ways of talking about the results of the trend analysis are used. The first way is through a summary table.

In Table 1, the reader will find a listing of the nine framework components and a key point related to the successful application of that particular principle. The table serves as an overview of what was found in the trend analysis.

The second way of talking about the results is through a text with a story-line. In prose format each of the framework components is discussed in terms of the major ideas that came out of the trend analysis. It gives the reader more detail and a good sense of how well the framework of good practice held up as a template.

Table 1 - Summary of the Trend Analysis Results	
Framework Component	Successful Application of Principles
Program Orientation ➤	✏ worker centred orientation
Program Evaluation ➤	✏ satisfaction with instructors, methods and materials ✏ growth of individuals at work and at home
Partnerships and Participation ➤	✏ advisory committees ✏ internal training committees
Equity ➤	(patterns of change) ✏ fair administration of program ✏ strategies to overcome learning problems
Principles of Adult Education ➤	✏ connection of worker and work goals ✏ diversity of learning style ✏ respectfulness ✏ continuous feedback
Program Content & Feedback ➤	✏ voluntary participation ✏ reading-technology readiness ✏ group and self-paced methods
Professional Development ➤	✏ profile of instructors' previous training ✏ qualities of a good instructor
Assessment ➤	✏ individual employee assessment ✏ continuous monitoring ✏ different views of what assessment is
On-Going Learning ➤	✏ program-step to lifelong learning ✏ positive management philosophy

Worker Centred Orientation

Program orientation is the first part of the framework. A clear pattern of worker centredness emerged for this component. The majority of the 18 programs used an approach that focused on specific worker needs. The following six basic skill areas were usually mentioned:

- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics
- Oral communications
- Work related problem solving
- Computers

However, it is unclear if the goals of the trainee were all work related or personally related. The distinctions were not made. Half of the companies indicated that changes in new technology needed to be addressed immediately. They saw an employee driven curriculum as the ideal way of changing their work culture in this direction. A few programs focused on the company's need to improve customer relations and provide a higher quality service.

Dimensions of Evaluation

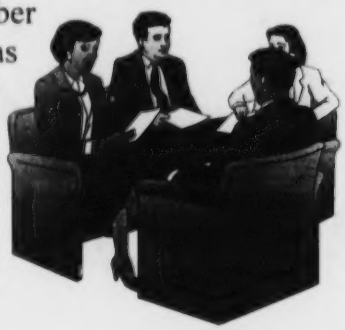
Evaluation is the next component of the framework. Three common themes came to light:

1. Participants' satisfaction usually with materials, instructors and methods.

2. The impact of the program such as growth of the individual, improvement of some work related tasks and an increase in general knowledge about the organization.

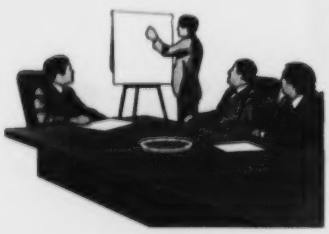
3. The variation in the evaluation processes with some program and evaluations being very formal.

The criteria for a successful program seemed to vary. Some used task mastery and attendance as indicators. Others used pre and post test results. Progress reports from the different stakeholders also helped define the evaluation process from beginning to end. If number counting was used in the evaluation it was helped out by qualitative information.



Vehicles for Partnerships and Partnerships

The type of participation by primary and secondary partners is an important part of the framework. Half of the programs from this study had advisory or steering committees guiding the program. The committees were made up of representatives from labour, management and, in some cases, service providers. Grants from various levels of government assisted in the different stages of program development. This type of support was mentioned as a success factor of all programs. Another common organizing structure was the internal training committee. This committee had representatives from management, the training coordinators and employees. In this type of committee, employees took greater ownership over the training. Employees also indicated that they would have liked more opportunities for involvement in the decision making process.



The role of the instructor varied from program to program. Sometimes the instructor took on additional roles such as raising awareness in the organization or acting as an advocate in the community. It was also noted that all kinds of partnership arrangements can work.

Defining Equity

Equity is the next element in the framework and is linked with partnership and participation. It was a difficult component to define. For the sake of the study, equity was defined as programs acting as agents in creating an equitable workforce. Each case study identified barriers in the system and/or elements that contributed to change. For organizational barriers, three key areas were mentioned:

- the hiring and promotion policies of many companies. It was felt by a number of employees that even with basic skills training their movement up the work ladder was hindered.

- whether or not the program was viewed as an extra benefit. In about one third of the case studies, employees felt that middle management perceived the program as a special perk and that it was not promoted enough in the organization.

- the negative impact of revealing problems associated with illiteracy.

For elements that contributed to change, two clear patterns were mentioned:

- fair administration of a program. All employees had to know about the program and had to have the same opportunity to participate in the training.

- different strategies used to overcome learning problems in the classroom. Employees had access to internal tutors, mentors, and supervisors with coaching skills if the need arose.

Adults as Learners

The practice of principles of adult education is the next part of the framework. Four key traits were identified from the data:

1. The needs of the learner and the goals of the workplace program were connected directly with the teaching materials used in the curriculum.

2. Different learning styles of the trainees were recognized. Classes were interactive or experiential or self-paced. The term "flexibility in content" was a common phrase often used to describe this trait.

3. The adult as a learner was respected. Examples of this included:

- views of the trainees were considered important in the learning culture of the classroom

- trainees had control over learning

- students of different academic levels in the same class were accepted.

4. Continuous feedback was given to trainees. Learners were engaged in constant dialogue, discussion and positive interactions. These strategies helped contribute to learner progress.

Program Content and Delivery

Program content and delivery is the next component of the framework. In all but one program, participation in the workplace program was voluntary. Program content varied from communication to technology readiness. However, most program content included reading, writing and mathematics.

Convenient times and locations for program delivery were mentioned in most studies. For example, in some cases, classes were held once a week for three hours while in others there was an

open entry and open exit policy. The length of the programs also varied from 12 weeks to 37 weeks. Classes in over half of the programs met on a fifty percent company time and a fifty percent employee time formula. In other programs classes were held after working hours.

A variety of delivery methods in classroom instruction was also evident such as group and self-paced methods. It is interesting to note that three case studies reported some use of computer based instruction. Two types of service provicers were usually involved: the internal company trainer, and the instructors from the colleges and school boards.

Professional Development

Professional development is another element of the framework. This factor was less clear than the other components. A profile of the instructors' previous training and the qualities of a professional in a workplace classroom seemed to surface from the data. A qualified instructor meant several things:

- instructors external to the company who were experienced in prior literacy activities or had received some formal training in adult education.

- internal staff or course leaders who were familiar with human resource issues or very involved in company training.

Preferred qualities of an instructor that were identified included:

- an ability to liaise well among employees, management, the union and service providing agencies

- an ability to model good communication skills

- an ability to adapt to program curriculum

- an availability before and after scheduled classes.

Surprisingly, the need for professional development opportunities for instructors was not mentioned.

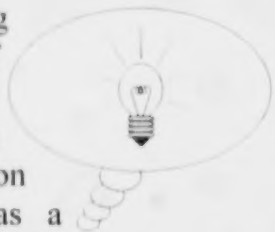
The Nature of Assessment

Assessment is the element in the framework that encircles on-going learning. The most common theme from the case studies was that most programs conducted an individual employee assessment during the planning stage. This activity was considered vital to the success of the program. The various processes used in conducting these assessments also contributed to employee self-confidence. In half the programs, the training needs of the workplace were considered by an organizational needs assessment, a literacy analysis, or a combination of both methods. The few programs that failed to conduct an initial assessment of employee or workplace needs experienced start up difficulty. This difficulty was related to the mismatching of learners with the content of the program.

A second theme was that various types of monitoring took place throughout the program. Usually the instructors or teachers were involved in this process. Occasionally peer assessment was used. In general, employee goals were supported and confidentiality respected. When employee goals included GED testing, the employees decided who would receive the results. Computerized assessment techniques were used minimally across all case studies.

A third theme was how employers viewed the assessment process. Many employers saw the value of a qualitative approach (understanding the experience of the employees through interviews), but some employers believed a quantitative approach (test scores) would have been more beneficial to the company.

On-going Learning to Lifelong Learning



On-going learning is at the centre of the framework. Most participants saw the instruction of basic skills as a necessary first step for lifelong learning. In a few instances the program was seen as contributing to the larger learning organization. When this type of culture was identified, employees were always involved in the planning and design of the program. It seemed that the learning naturally spilled over into their work, family and community lives. In half of the case studies, the program content was directly linked to the workplace or to specific tasks on the job which increased the desire to want to learn more.

The management's philosophy toward lifelong learning was another key theme that emerged. In most cases, there was a genuine support from management to continue the services. Often support for on-going learning included the provision of tutorial services for learners having difficulties and the promotion of employees' stories through company newsletters. Overall, these programs were viewed as part of a long term strategy to enhance employee satisfaction and encourage learning for the sake of learning.

✏ A tool for new instructors.

As new workplace instructors come on board, they often experience information overload, trying to keep track of who is responsible for what and how to meet all the needs of the stakeholders. This framework can act as an orientation tool. It can give people who are just beginning to fit into the picture of workplace literacy an overview of the key principles and components of good practice. At a glance, the framework can help explain the movement between parts of a program.

✏ A marketing concept for clients.

Trying to introduce a potential client to all of the essential elements in workplace education can sometimes be a daunting task. Clients often come to the table with a different terminology, specific needs and all kinds of questions. The framework could be used to graphically illustrate all of the key ideas that make up a workplace education initiative.

It gives the client a sense of the big picture and a good idea of the who, what, where, when and why of workplace learning. It can also serve to help the client focus on areas which require further elaboration.

✏ A guide for planning programs.

When it comes down to the task of program planning in workplace education, there are numerous factors to be kept in mind. The framework of good practices could be used as a guide in this kind of planning event. It represents a confirmation of the most important principles and components of a workplace program. The framework could be viewed as a map to help the planner incorporate the foundational blocks for a quality type of delivery. It also can increase awareness of potential barriers and programmatic problems.

✏ A way to structure instructor training.

Often competing forces such as time

and a lack of funds, don't allow for quality training for workplace instructors. The framework can be viewed as one way of identifying training needs for instructors. It depicts the areas that are crucial for a successful workplace program. By going through the framework. a group of instructors can begin to articulate which needs require new information — a type of needs assessment exercise. As well, the framework could be a useful part of the curriculum for a certification program of workplace instructors.

- A format to evaluate a workplace program.

Ways to evaluate a program are as numerous as the types of learners that are attracted to them. There are no clear cut formulas for program evaluation, nor should there be. Where it becomes challenging sometimes, is when different stakeholders have different expectations of the evaluation process and the results. The framework of good practice could be used as a template for evaluation among the key stakeholders. This template could be brought to the table early in the planning process and a type of consensus building exercise could result as to what components would be evaluated.

The Building Blocks of Workplace Education

It would seem that many of the framework components may be useful as building blocks in the development of workplace education initiatives. A number of common elements from program practice clearly surfaced when enlarged through the lens of the framework. One of these was the framework component of "Partnerships and Participation". By bringing different voices together to plan and carry out a program, partnerships can be formed at both the primary and secondary level. The notion of partnership appears crucial to any workplace intervention. Another component that can be used as a building block is the program orientation of worker centredness. It became evident that of the three foci or approaches towards a workplace education program, the orientation of a worker focus was prevalent. There appeared to be a tendency for creating relevant and meaningful learning situations which met the goals of the trainee first and often blended with the goals of the organization.

Evidence was also provided for a third framework component — on-going assessment. Several key points are worthy of mention here. Almost every program analyzed in the study had conducted an individual employee assessment during the planning stage. Both the instructors and the learners believed that this activity was of vital importance to the success of the program. Along with this, many of the programs through trial and error, had made significant attempts to have the process of assessment viewed as a systematic event. A fourth component which could act as a building block falls under the category of program content and delivery. Although the data was somewhat messy in this category, voluntary participation and conducting classes at the work site, along with focusing on the basic skills that are relevant to the trainee emerged as important guide posts. As well, principles of adult education, program evaluation and on-going learning are foundational pieces to the workplace education puzzle.

Challenging Practitioners to be Researchers

As much as the framework held up as a template with program practice in the field, it does need some fine tuning. Two components in the framework were less clearly defined — equity and professional development. This may be due to the early conceptualizations of these components and the somewhat indirect attention of this type of information in the actual case study write-ups of the 18 programs. What needs to be done to sharpen the focus of these principles is a closer look for examples from your work situations. For example, on the principle of equity:

- How can evidence for equity be gathered?
- What would constitute equity?
- How can coordinators raise equity issues with their employers?
- What elements are key to understanding equity?
- Describe an equity situation.

Another principle in the framework that needs further elaboration is professional development. This component needs to be clarified by asking some of the following questions:

- What types of pre-service training seems to work for your situation?
- How does the sponsoring agency

view in-service training for the workplace instructors?

- How do you identify professional development needs of instructors?

- Are electronic discussion groups, journal clubs and other non-formal learning events credible professional development activities?

- Describe some examples of effective professional development.

Although transfer of learning is not part of the framework, it is an element that is important to address here. In all of the case studies analyzed, no mention was made of the transfer of learning. It may be important for people to see that transfer of learning is not an automatic thing but something that can be planned for. It can occur before, during and after a program. And the instructor, the learner and the workplace supervisor can all play an important role in the transfer of learning. Consider these questions:

- What does transfer of learning mean to you?

- When is transfer of learning most likely to occur in your program?

- How can you encourage the workplace supervisor to become more involved in learning transfer?

- Describe a transfer of learning situation from your program.

The Link Between Training and Education

Another area that is brought to the forefront as a result of the framework tool is the convergence between education and training. Although they have often been considered as polar extremes, the results of this study suggest that good training can include serious conceptual development and that education is more meaningful when it is conceptualized in practical activities. Some researchers have mentioned that the essence of successful learning strategies is to use the same workplace operations as a scaffold on which to build the conceptual or cognitive skills that are missing. As indicated in the results, the workplace can be an ideal context in which to plant cognitive development of a higher order. Thinking skills and functional reading and writing habits can be developed while doing practical tasks that lead to portable skills within an organization.

Using the Framework to Reflect on our Practice

As a program coordinator or workplace instructor, you may find it important to look at your own program through the lens of the Framework of Good Practice. What is proposed in the following section is a set of guiding questions which are directly related to the nine components of the framework in Figure 1. This reflection may be the start of a conversation on how to do something differently in your program.

A Reflective Exercise

1. Orientation of Program

Describe how worker goals and company goals are reflected in the program?

2. Partnership and Participation

a) How did the primary partnership work out between employers and employees? Why?

b) What were some of the highlights or disappointments between the secondary partners? (i.e. service providers, funders, instructors)

3. Equity

a) Were there any program factors that contributed to the development of an equitable workplace? (i.e. equal opportunities to enroll)

b) Were there any systematic program barriers that stifled the development of an equitable workplace? (i.e. promotion, perceptions of the program)

4. Assessment

List the various types of assessment procedures that were used throughout the whole program? How did the employees and the employers respond to these techniques?

5. On-Going Learning

Describe the link between the on-going learning of the employees in the program and the learning culture of the company?

6. Beliefs about Adult Education

Name 3 key principles of adult education that were practiced in your program. Illustrate each with an example.

7. Program Content and Delivery

What are a few important features of the program and delivery? How would you describe the uniqueness of the program?

8. **Professional Development**

What kinds of staff development needs were voiced? Are there any plans to address them?

9. **Evaluation**

How was the success of the program talked about? Describe in a sentence or two the evaluation process for the program?